



California's Child and Family Services Review System Improvement Plan	
County:	Napa County
Responsible County Child Welfare Agency	Napa County Child Welfare Services
Period of Plan	6/5/07-6/5/09
Period of Outcomes Data	April 2007
Date Submitted	June 5, 2007
County Contact Person for System Improvement Plan	
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Name:	Linda Canan
Signature:	
Submitted by:	County Chief Probation Officer
Name:	Mary Butler
Signature:	

I. SIP Narrative

1. Local Planning Bodies

Individuals Involved in the Self-Assessment Planning Process The following individuals were: (1) included in all mailings regarding group discussions, minutes of meeting, feedback on the draft report; and/or (2) attended local stakeholder group meetings regarding redesign; and/or (3) were individually interviewed regarding some aspect of the child welfare system in Napa County.

Name	Affiliation
Adriana Navarro	CPSWII, Napa County, ER Court
Billy Harville	CPSWII, Napa County, Ongoing
Carrie Gallagher	County Counsel
Chelsea Stoner	Social Worker
Christina Grattan	CDSS, State Adoptions
Claudia Shockley	State Adoptions
Jennifer Marcelli	CPSWII, Napa County, Ongoing
Julie Baptista	Supervising Probation Officer
Kristy Reynoso	Supervising Social Worker II, CPS
Lola Chester	Director, CASA
Allen Davis	CPSWII, Napa County, SB163
Deborah Sittner	CWS/CMS Support Analyst, Napa HHS
Debra Robinson	Napa County PHN, Foster Care
Denise Traina	Principal Quality Mgmt Specialist
Gail McDonough	Systems Analyst QM
Marjorie Lewis	Supervising Social Worker II, CPS
Mike McElroy	System Support Analyst, Napa HHS
Shana Allen	CPSWII, Napa County, Ongoing
Shaunna Murtha	CPSWII, Napa County
Alissa Gentile	Program Director VOICES
Allen Ewig	Executive Director, Aldea Child/Family Services
Mark Boessenecker	Napa County DA's Office
Peter Dreier	Executive Director, Housing Authority
Steven Payette	Napa Police Department
Teresa Zimny	Program Manager, CalWorks/Eligibility
Tim Cantillon	Napa Police Department Sergeant
Todd Shulman	Napa City Police Dept.
Tricia Howell	SELPA Director, NCOE
Barbara Reynolds	Supervising MHCII - Lic
Brenda Flores	SWII, Transportation Coordinator
Carla Dal Porto	Foster Parent CRP Member

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Name	Affiliation
Denise Seeley	Supervising MHCII - Lic
Doris Smith	Housing Programs Coordinator, Housing Authority
Halsey Simmons	Assistant Behavioral Health Care Manager
Jason Weiss	Director Napa Boys & Girl's Clubs
Jennifer Stewart	CATALYST Coalition Coordinator, NCOE
Joan Lockhart	Director, Parents CAN
Joelle Gallagher	Director, COPE Family Resource Center
Kathy Martin	NVUSD
Neil Bowman-Davis	Family Law Facilitator
Norma Cervantes	CPSWII, Intake & Prevention Services
Terry Beck	MHCII, Licensed, SB 163
Terry Shuster	Ed Center/Special Education
Walt Mazar	Napa Sheriff's Office
Laraine Jeffries	SUPV MENTAL HLTH CO II-LICENSED
Rebecca Feiner	Supervising MHCII - Lic
Sandra Maggioli	CPSWII, Napa County, ER Court
Sarah Pritchard	Director, CAPC of Napa County
Shirin Vakharia	Supervising MHCII - Substance Abuse/Tobacco
Tracy Lamb	NEWS, Napa Emergency Women's Shelter
Ann Ohren	CDSS, State Adoptions Napa Supervisor
Colleen Stoner	Probation
Cyndia Cole	Trainer, Bay Area Academy
Doris Gentry	President, Foster Parent Assoc.
Doug Calkin	Staff Services Analyst II, Napa County
Martha Catalan	Senior Office Assistant, Children's Services
Stephanie Brennan	Supervising Social Worker II, CPS
Susan Harris	SWIII, Foster Care Licensing Analyst
Karl Porter	Staff Services Manager, Napa County Probation
Mary Butler	Chief Probation Officer
Adam Stein	Director, Special Ed, NVUSD
Alan Foss	Parent
Alicia Borrego	Attorney, Parent Representation
Amber McCurdy	VOICES, PT Youth Staff/Founder
Andrea Knowlton	NCOE
Ann Laning	Attorney, Minor Representation
Bob Thompson	Grant Director, NVUSD
Christopher Loizeaux	Attorney, Parent Representation
Daniel Chester	Attorney, Parent/Minor Representation
Darcy Taylor	CPSWII, Napa County, Family Preservation
Dave Miller	Director, UpValley Education
David Fyfe	Supervising MHCII - Lic
Deanna Moore-Slaight	CRP Parent Member
Diana Davis-Lopez	MHC, Napa County MH Services

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Name	Affiliation
Diana Loretz	CDSS, State Adoptions Manager
Heather Kelly	CRP Parent Member
Ismail Akman	Children's Services Analyst
Jan Milthaler	CDSS, State Adoptions
Jeannie Morris	Napa Valley Unified School District
Jonna Justiniano	VOICES, Operations Director
Kris Kissel	Supervising Office Assistant, Children's Services
Lauren Harris	CPSWII, Napa County, Ongoing
Linda Canan	Napa Children's Welfare Services Director
Lucy Bueno	SWIII, Intake & Prevention Services
Mark Bontrager	Deputy Director ALDEA
Mitchell Findley	VOICES, Asst. Prog. Director
Monique Langhorne-Johnson	Superior Court Commissioner
Nancy Schulz	IHSS Manager
Sherry Tennyson	American Canyon-Family Resource Center

Local Planning Body Representatives Involved with the Self-Assessment or Systems Improvement Plan (SIP)

Aldea, Inc.

Services are focused on prevention and treatment services for families in which child abuse or neglect has occurred, where the children have been identified as being at high risk of abuse or neglect or where the children are at risk of out of home placement. Aldea provides a continuum of treatment programs including Aldea Training Institute, child abuse prevention treatment, outpatient services, treatment foster care (FFA), day treatment, school-based programs (latency and adolescent), and residential treatment.

Children At-Risk Team Meeting (CARTU)

An interagency team meeting designed to provide a roundtable discussion of children with challenging health, mental health or behavioral issues. Members work to develop a consensus treatment plan or approach and report progress on service plan goals.

Children's Health Initiative

Provides health insurance products to uninsured Napa County children who are living in poverty. The lack of health insurance and regular access to primary medical care not only puts children's health at risk, but it also causes a greater strain on community resources both now and in the future, which increases costs for employers and taxpayers. Health coverage is considered a primary poverty prevention service as research indicates that children who have access to quality, preventative care stay healthier and that health status is a strong determining factor in achieving academic success and becoming economically self-sufficient.

Community Resources for Children (CRC)

CRC provides childcare referrals for parents to licensed family child care homes and licensed childcare centers. CRC has funding for limited emergency childcare for families in crisis. In addition, the CRC registry includes childcare resources for children with special needs.

Cope Family Center

This agency provides prevention, intervention and advocacy services such as home visiting, developmental assessments, parenting workshops, and supervised visitation. Cope is also a member of the One Family Network.¹ The Emergency Response Unit of CPS frequently refers families to Cope when the needs of the family do not require intervention by CPS. Cope provides a comprehensive range of services to families including home visitation, parent education, parent support groups, Kid's Turn workshops, emergency assistance and referrals to counseling and other community resources.

Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)

Provides screened and trained volunteers to advocate on behalf of children who are dependents of the court. CASA volunteer services include independent assessments of a child's status and progress as well as monitoring of supervised visits with families and home visits.

Drug and Alcohol Prevention for Youth

Community organizations, local school districts and law enforcement agencies all participate in a variety of prevention activities. These activities are coordinated by Napa County Health and Human Services through the Substance Abuse Services Prevention Unit.

Family Preservation Services

Now a unit of Child Welfare Services, the goal of the program is to prevent the removal of children from the home or to expedite reunification. This is accomplished through in-home support from family preservation practitioners to families that includes: assistance with parenting, transportation, budget management, housing and referrals to community resources. These staff persons have significantly reduced caseloads.

Family Group Conference Program

A voluntary program, Child Welfare Services offers this service to families who want to be active members in the case planning process. Positive outcomes can include avoidance of foster care placement, early reunification, and alternatives to court action.

Independent Living Foster Care Program

Services offered to transition-aged youth include independent living skills classes (e.g., securing a job, money management, making decisions and choices) and financial assistance with college or vocational schools.

¹ There are now Family Resource Centers located in St. Helena, American Canyon, and Calistoga as well. It is anticipated that all centers will be providing collaborative prevention services in the near future.

Parents Can Family Resource Center

It provides both prevention and advocacy services for families of children with special needs. Parents Can is a part of the One Family Network of Napa County.

MHSA Full Service Partnership for Children

Funded by the Mental Health Services Act and provided by collaborative service agreements between Napa County Health and Human Services and community agencies. Primarily aimed at mono-lingual Spanish speaking families, provides wraparound services for children in high-need families. Families with a high risk of one or more parents being incarcerated, intensive social service needs, who are least likely to access conventional services. The goal of the program is to prevent the removal of children from the home.

Multi-Agency Assessment, Referral and Placement Team (MARP)

This team meets every two weeks to review children who are ‘at risk’ of needing services and supports, currently in foster care, on probation, or new to the district and who are challenging to support.

Napa County Office of Education (NCOE).

The County Office provides several countywide prevention programs (e.g., Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities, Tobacco Use Prevention Education, HIV/STD Prevention Education) aimed at youth.

Napa County Policy Committee

This is an interagency body of policy-makers that meets monthly in order to resolve common issues in serving foster youth through communication and training.

Napa County Therapeutic Child Care

Provides therapeutic child care services for children of families grappling with domestic violence, mental illness, and substance abuse.

Napa County Women's Recovery Program

A women’s substance abuse recovery that provides outpatient day program addressing substance abuse, learning to maintain a drug free lifestyle, parenting, family and interpersonal relations, individual, family and group counseling.

Napa Emergency Women’s Shelter (NEWS)

In addition to shelter services for women who are victims of domestic violence, NEWS provides outreach, prevention education throughout the Napa County.

Napa Superior Court’s Guardianship Project

Funded by the Superior Court and a grant from the Children’s Trust Fund, this service provides relatives and non-relatives support and assistance in filing for guardianship of children whose biological families are unable to provide care.

V.O.I.C.E.S. (Voice Our Independent Choices For Emancipation Support)

Provides emancipating foster youth with a comprehensive array of individual support services, opportunities for leadership and community development and structured initiatives e.g., housing, employment, post high school education) that require a commitment over time and are focused on meeting a specific set of needs.

Volunteer Center of Napa Valley - Child Assault Prevention Program.

Volunteers in Napa classrooms provide child assault prevention workshops for children, parents, and teachers.

Wraparound/SB 163

A collaborative, interagency effort designed to help children avoid out-of-home placement or be reintegrated into their home community as soon as possible after placement.

Wolfe Center

Designed as a “one stop” program serving substance abusing youth and their families from throughout Napa County. Services include treatment, Ongoing support for recovering youth, community awareness and prevention services.

Napa County Child Welfare Service's June 2007-June 2009

Component A: Safety	Outcome/Systemic Factor:						
	1B Percent recurrence of maltreatment within 12 months						
	County’s Current Performance: For the most recent 12 month period for which results are available, ending 9/30/05, 10.9% of children with substantiated referrals had subsequent substantiated referrals within 12 months						
	Improvement Goal 1.0: By June 2009 6.5% of all substantiated referrals within the 12 month study period will have a subsequent substantiated referral.						
	Strategy 1.1:			Strategy Rationale:			
	Implement a standardized safety, risk and protective capacity tool for the seven decision-making points in child welfare, covering the standard areas of review as defined by the state.			The State is requiring all counties to utilize a standardized approach to assessing safety, risk and protective capacity throughout a child welfare referral and/or case. It is an important professional value that all children and families are assessed using the same criteria and that decisions are well documented.			
	Milestones	1.1.1 Napa County CAT team is formed and will meet initially bi-monthly and then on an as need basis to develop and monitor the implementation of the CAT.			Timeframes	January 2007 and then ongoing	Assigned To
1.1.2 Representative/s from the Napa County CAT team is chosen and requested to attend the All Counties “User Group”.			January 2007 and the ongoing	Napa CAT team.			

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	1.1.3 Representative/s from the Napa County CAT team is chosen to be the liaison with SPHERE regarding I.T. and Evaluation component of CAT implementation.		February 2007 and ongoing		Senior Systems Support Analyst
	1.1.4 CAT is implemented across the whole system.		March 5th, 2007		Assistant Child Welfare Director
	1.1.5 CAT training is provided to Adult Crisis ER staff		April 2007		Assistant Child Welfare Director
	1.1.6 Analyze data to ensure staffs compliance with completing and entering the CAT.		Ongoing Quarterly commencing June 2007		Senior Systems Support Analyst
Strategy 1.2: Supervisors and case workers meet before closing any dependency case to review any risks posed to the child after services cease.		Strategy Rationale: Addressing risks posed to families as they exit Child Welfare supervised care encourages familial stability and mitigates against recurrences of abuse or neglect.			
Milestones	1.2.1 Develop a list of resources available in the community responding to the needs of families as they are transitioning from Child Welfare Services	Timeframes	April 2008	Assigned To	Resources Specialist Staff

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	1.2.2 Develop a case closure policy that requires a safety and risk assessment utilizing the case closure CAT tool for all clients in meetings between case worker and supervisor.		August 2008		Policy Workgroup
	1.2.3 Track referrals made at case closure to outside agencies to assess level of utilization, and how the likelihood of a safe placement and transition from Child Welfare Services is impacted by referrals for different types of services		October 2008		Staff Services Analyst
Strategy 1.3 : Conduct case record reviews after instances of recurrent abuse or neglect.		Strategy Rationale: If recurrent abuse or neglect does happen it is important to identify and address the factors that led to the recurrence of abuse or neglect.			
Milestones	1.3.1 Create a Business Objects query to identify any substantiations that occur within 12 months of a previous substantiation	Timeframe	January 2008	Assigned to	Staff Services Analyst
	1.3.2 Convene a workgroup to meet on a monthly basis to review the CWS/CMS history of cases and referrals that had a subsequent substantiation within 12 months based on the business objects report.		March 2008		Assistant Child Welfare Services Director
	1.3.3 Track characteristics of cases with recurrent abuse or neglect to identify factors that significantly increase the risk of recurrent abuse or neglect.		May 2008		Staff Services Analyst

Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal. Implement a standardized safety, risk and protective capacity tool across the system. Implement a Case Record review workgroup to specifically consider cases in which recurrent abuse or neglect has occurred. Implement a policy and procedure that requires the use of the CAT case closure tool during a case worker/supervisor meeting prior to closing the case.
Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals. Train staff regarding CAT. Identify and train staff who should participate in the recurrence of abuse or neglect workgroup ensuring equal representation across the agency. Train Staff Services Analyst to the use of Business Objects.
Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals. Community partners must receive and respond to referrals involving families exiting Child Welfare services. Additionally, community partners should be willing to work with CWS staff to track referrals made by CWS and utilization of these services by families.
Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals. None needed.

Component C: Safety	Outcome/Systemic Factor:					
	2B- Child Abuse/Neglect Referrals with a Timely Response					
	County's Current Performance: For Quarter ending June 30, 2006, Napa County had an 88.0% compliance rate for timely completion of 10-day investigations.					
	Improvement Goal 2.0: Improve and maintain compliance at over 90%					
	Strategy 2.1:			Strategy Rationale:		
	Monitor the effects of the restructuring of the Emergency Response Component of Napa Child welfare.			Napa County is committed to utilizing its resources in the most effective manner. The Emergency response and after hour's program highlights the need to reorganize the emergency response program to ensure timely response and the capacity to respond to referrals in a timely manner.		
	Milestones	2.1.1 Monitor effectiveness by meeting with Emergency Response Unit to discuss and review Safe Measures compliance regarding timely response.	Timeframes	June 2007 and quarterly	Assigned To	E.R. Supervisors
		2.1.2 Supervisors to review individual workers compliance with ten day referrals in supervision.		May 2007		E.R. Supervisors
		2.1.3 Supervisors to review the units' compliance with ten day referrals monthly at CLT.		May 2007 and monthly		E.R. Supervisors
		2.1.4 Program Analyst to monitor Division's compliance with ten day referrals and present at CLT monthly.		Quarterly		Staff Services Analyst

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	Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal. Reorganize the Emergency Response Program in Napa County.
	Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals. Provide training to ER staff on new policies and practices.
	Provide ongoing CWS/CMS and Safe Measures training.
	Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals. Communicate changes in program to partners such as Adult Mental Health and other mandated reporters.
	Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals. None

Component B: Safety	Outcome/Systemic Factor:
	2 C - Timely Social Worker Visits With Child
	County's Current Performance:
	For the quarter ending June 30, 2006, Napa County had an 87.4% average compliance rate for timely completion of 30-day visits between child and worker.
	Improvement Goal 3.0:
	Maintain compliance of social worker visits at 90% or above.

Strategy 3.1: Using Safe Measures obtain and monitor county data for monthly social worker visit compliance to analyze trends and performance.		Strategy Rationale: Safe Measures is a CWS/CMS application that allows supervisors and managers to monitor unit and worker performance on specific process and outcome indicators. Use of Safe Measures to supervise staff supports worker accountability.			
Milestones	3.1.1 Issue memo to staff to ensure understanding of expectations regarding monthly social worker visits. Including that all contacts need to be entered in to CWS/CMS on the 15 th day of the month after the visit.	Timeframes	April 2007	Assigned To	Child Welfare Director Assistant Child Welfare Director
	3.1.2 Issue CWS/CMS guide to staff to explain the process of entering social worker visits accurately in CWS/CMS.		April 2007		Systems Support Analyst
	3.1.3 If necessary provide Safe Measures training to Supervisors to ensure the ability to monitor staffs compliance with this outcome.		May 2007		Systems Support Analyst
	3.1.4 Supervisors to review individual workers compliance with monthly social worker visits during supervision.		May 2007		Ongoing Services Supervisors
	3.1.5 Supervisors to review the units’ compliance with monthly supervised visits monthly at CLT.		May 2007 and monthly		Ongoing Services Supervisors
	3.1.6 Program Analyst to monitor Division’s compliance with monthly social worker visits and		Quarterly		Staff Services Analyst

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	present at CLT monthly.				
	Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal. Develop county policy regarding timeframes of entering contacts in CWS/CMS.				
	Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals.				
	Provide ongoing CWS/CMS and Safe Measures training.				
	Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals. None				
	Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals. None				

Component B: Safety	Outcome/Systemic Factor: 2 C - Timely Probation Officer Contacts With Parent				
	County's Current Performance: Probation Foster Care Placement Monthly Caseload Statistical Report indicates that Probation workers currently make 50% of their monthly contacts with parents of children under their care				
	Improvement Goal 4.0: Maintain compliance of probation officer contacts with parents at 90% or above.				
	Strategy 4.1: Using numbers from the monthly Probation Foster Care Placement Monthly Caseload Statistical Report to obtain and monitor county data for monthly social worker visit compliance to analyze trends and performance.		Strategy Rationale: These monthly reports allow supervisors and managers to monitor unit performance on specific process and outcome indicators.		

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Milestones	4.1.1 Issue memo to staff to ensure understanding of expectations regarding monthly probation officer contacts. Communicating that monthly contacts will now be tracked as part of the SIP	Timeframes	January 2008	Assigned To	Chief Probation Officer
	4.1.2 Supervisors to review individual workers compliance with monthly probation officer contacts during supervision.		January 2008		Probation Supervisors
	4.1.3 Supervisors to review the units' compliance with monthly supervised contacts monthly during management meetings		March 2008		Probation Management Team
	4.1.4 Supervising Probation Officer to monitor Division's compliance by tracking and compiling monthly Probation Foster Care Placement Monthly Caseload Statistical Report.		Quarterly		Staff Services Manager
Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal Develop Department policy which states contacts are to occur monthly with parents.					
Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals. All probation officers will attend training regarding all contacts but emphasis will be on the monthly contact with parents.					
Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals. None					
Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals. None					

Component C: Safety	Outcome/Systemic Factor: 3 F Percent of admissions who are re-entries					
	County's Current Performance: For the most recent 12 month period for which results are available, ending 9/30/06, 9.8% of children admitted to child welfare supervised foster care were subsequent entries within 12 months of a prior exit.					
	Improvement Goal 5.0: Maintain the rate of admissions that are reentries as less than 8.6%.					
	Strategy 5.1: Utilize Differential Response to use community-based, culturally competent preventative services for families at risk of child abuse and neglect; this will support communities in increasing quantity and quality of services.			Strategy Rationale: The use of Differential response will improve family engagement, assist referred families to build on their strengths, and link families with community leaders and resources. This will help communities to "care for their own."		
	Milestones	5.1.1 Establish Differential Response Implementation Planning Committee.	Timeframes	May 2007	Assigned To	Senior Staff Services Analyst
		5.1.2 Explore Collaboration with COPE, Family Resource Centers and other community partners.		February 2007		Senior Staff Services Analyst
		5.1.3 Explore potential funding sources for implementation and ongoing support of DR		July 2007		Child Welfare Director
		5.1.4 Develop Policy responding to funding requirements including reporting time frames and implementation goals		Aug 2007		Assistant Child Welfare Director Senior Staff Services

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					Analyst
		5.1.5 Choose and solidify contracted collaboration partnerships using dedicated DR funding		Aug 2007	Senior Staff Services Analyst
		5.1.6 Contracts with collaboration partners signed and approved		Oct 2007	Senior Staff Services Analyst
		5.1.7 Plan completed, staff and community partners trained.		Nov 2007	BAA
		5.1.8 Differential Response implemented.		Dec 2007	Senior Staff Services Analyst E.R. Supervisor
Strategy 5.2:		Strategy Rationale:			
Establish Kinship Support Services Program and expand the number of Placements with Relatives and Non-Related Extended Families.		Early identification of relatives and establishing family support may assist in ameliorating safety factors in families, allowing the child to remain at home, in a relative placement.			
Milestones		5.2.1 Establish Kinship Support Services Program Steering Committee.	Timeframes	May 2007	Assigned To Child Welfare Director
		5.2.2 Research/obtain a search engine to identify relatives and utilize an aide position to search for relatives.		August 2007	

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	5.2.3 Expand Family Group Conferencing, family meetings and LIFE conferences.		July 2007		Continuing Services Supervisor
	5.2.4 Provide training to staff on the importance of life long connections to provide support to children and families.		October 2007		Children’s Leadership Team
Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal. Identify partners and develop policy regarding Differential Response in Napa County. Establish Kinship Support Services Steering Committee. Develop policy regarding relative placements when the relative has a criminal history.					
Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals. Training Staff and Community Partners in Differential Response. Develop training for Differential Response case managers. Train staff on the importance of building relative connections to provide support to children and families.					
Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals. Community Partners to collaborate and become partners in implementing differential response.					
Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals. None					

Component D: Permanence	Outcome/Systemic Factor:					
	3 A - Length of Time to Exit Foster Care to Reunification.					
	County's Current Performance: 39.1% of children who entered foster care for the first time (and stayed at least five days) during the 12-month period (7/1/04 – 6/30/05) were reunified within 12 months in Napa County.					
	Improvement Goal 6.0: Increase the percent of children reunified within 12 months to 47%.					
	Strategy 6.1:			Strategy Rationale:		
	Implement a standardized safety, risk and protective capacity tool for the seven decision-making points in child welfare, covering the standard areas of review as defined by the state.			The State is requiring all counties to utilize a standardized approach to assessing safety, risk and protective capacity throughout a child welfare referral and/or case. It is an important professional value that all children and families are assessed using the same criteria and that decisions are well documented.		
	Milestones	6.1.1 Napa County CAT team is formed and will meet initially bi-monthly and then on an as need basis to develop and monitor the implementation of the CAT.	Timeframes	January 2007 and then ongoing	Assigned To	Napa CAT team.
		6.1.2 Representative/s from the Napa County CAT team is chosen and requested to attend the All Counties "User Group".		January 2007 and the ongoing		Napa CAT team.
		6.1.3 Representative/s from the Napa County CAT team is chosen to be the liaison with SPHERE regarding I.T. and Evaluation component of CAT implementation.		February 2007 and ongoing		Senior Systems Support Analyst

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	6.1.4 Cat is implemented across the whole system.		March 5th, 2007		Assistant Child Welfare Director
	6.1.5 CAT training is provided to Adult Crisis ER staff		April 2007		Assistant Child Welfare Director
	6.1.6 Analyze data to ensure staffs compliance with completing and entering the CAT.		Ongoing Quarterly commencing June 2007		Senior Systems Support Analyst
Strategy 6.2: Plan and Implement a Parent Partner Program.		Strategy Rationale: Provide parents entering the system with accurate information, advocacy and mentoring by providing them assistance from a Parent Partner.			
Milestones	6.2.1 Recruit and train part time Parent Partners.	Timeframes	June 2007	Assigned To	CWS Director Senior Staff Services Analyst
	6.2.2 Develop a brochure regarding the Parent Partner program to give to parents.		December 2007		CWS Director Senior Staff Services Analyst
	6.2.3 Pilot one-on-one mentoring for families in Napa County.		December 2007		CWS Director Senior Staff Services Analyst
	6.2.4 Develop a parent handbook to assist parents in navigating the system.		March 2008		CWS Director Senior Staff Services Analyst

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		6.2.5 Evaluate the effectiveness of the Parent Partner Program and plan for expansion.		January 2009		CWS Director Senior Staff Services Analyst
		6.2.6 Continue to recruit and train part time Parent Partners.		January 2008 and ongoing		CWS Director Senior Staff Services Analyst
	Strategy 6.3: Improve communication between Resources Specialist staff and child welfare worker, to provide a Linkages case plan that best meets the needs of the family.		Strategy Rationale: Coordinated case plans can maximize funding dollars, eliminate duplication of effort, and support families in maintaining and strengthening family stability and well-being.			
	Milestones	6.3.1 Review existing policy regarding identification of families served by the child welfare system and CalWORKS program and develop policy.	Timeframes	September 2007	Assigned To	Continuing Services Supervisor Assistant Child Welfare Director
		6.3.2 Train Resource Specialist staff and CWS staff in policy to create a coordinated Linkages plan and AB 429.		November 2007		Continuing Services Supervisor
		6.3.3 Implement policy.		December 2007		Assistant Child Welfare Director
		6.3.4 Evaluate the implementation of the policy and compliance with AB 429 for full integration of CalWORKS and CWS.		February 2008 and ongoing		Assistant Child Welfare Director

					Staff Services Analyst
Strategy 6.4:		Strategy Rationale:			
Continue to improve the quality and frequency of visitation.		Research and promising practices indicate that there is a correlation between frequency and quality of visits between parents and children and timeliness of reunification.			
Milestones	6.4.1 Participate in the work group to coordinate a Symposium in May 2007 to explore best practice visitation.	Timeframe	Ongoing	Assigned to	Continuing Services Supervisor
	6.4.2 Request the BAA to obtain visitation policies and procedures from San Francisco, Santa Cruz, Sacramento and other counties.		February 2007		Continuing Services Supervisor
	6.4.3 Invite HHSA partners to Symposium to hear best practice visitation policies and procedures and commit to making a plan for Napa County. Partners to include foster parents and social workers.		March 2007		Continuing Services Supervisor
	6.4.4 Co-ordinate meetings with the above partners to develop the most effective visitation policy for Napa County, and implementation plan.		April ongoing.		Continuing Services Supervisor
	6.4.5 Present progress and recommendations to CLT		June ongoing		Continuing Services Supervisor
	6.4.6 Implement visitation plan.		December 2007		CLT

Strategy 6.5: Implement “Icebreaker meetings” (birth parent/foster parent meetings) to increase the frequency and quality of visitation between parent		Strategy Rationale: Research and promising practices indicate there is a correlation between frequency and quality of visits between parents and children and timeliness of reunification.			
Milestones	6.5.1 Explore how other counties have implemented the “icebreaker” meeting.	Timeframe	June 2007	Assigned to	Continuing Services Supervisors
	6.5.2 Develop a plan to implement icebreakers.		September 2007		Continuing Services Supervisors
	6.5.3 Develop an icebreaker policy		December 2007		Continuing Services Supervisors
	6.5.4 Train Staff and foster parents in icebreakers.		January 2008		Continuing Services Supervisors
	6.5.5 Implement icebreakers.		February 2008		Continuing Services Supervisors
Strategy 6.6: Explore the use of Family Meetings at the time of removal and at pivotal moments in the life of a child’s case.		Strategy Rationale: Other California Counties and other states have implemented Family Meetings which have decreased removal and increased relative and non-related extended family member placements.			

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Milestones	6.6.1 Expand Family Group Conferencing, family meetings and LIFE conferences.	Timeframe	July 2007	Assigned to	Continuing Services Supervisor
	6.6.2 Develop policy regarding when family meetings will occur in Napa County.		May 2007		Child Welfare Director Assistant Child Welfare Director Continuing Services Supervisor
	6.6.3 Train Facilitators, staff and Community Partners		June 2007		Continuing Services Supervisor
	6.6.4 Implement family meetings		July 2007		Continuing Services Supervisor
	6.6.5 Evaluate the effectiveness of family meetings		July 2008		Staff Services Analyst
Describe systemic changes needed to further support the improvement goal. Implement a standardized safety, risk and protective capacity tool across the system. Implement a Parent Partner Program. Provide Linkages case plan that best meets the needs of the family. Improve the quality and frequency of visitation. Implement “Icebreaker meetings”.					
Describe educational/training needs (including technical assistance) to achieve the improvement goals. Train staff and Adult Crisis ER staff regarding CAT. Train facilitators, staff and community members regarding family meetings. Train Parent Partners. Train Resource Specialist staff and CWS staff in policy to create a coordinated Linkages plan and AB 429. Train staff and foster parents in icebreakers. Train Facilitators, staff and Community Partners in “Family Meetings”.					
Identify roles of the other partners in achieving the improvement goals. Adult Crisis ER to participate in the implementation of CAT. Engage Parent Partners in the child welfare system. Coordinate with Resource Specialist to create coordinated Linkages plan.					

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Request BAA to obtain visitation policies from other counties and coordinate Symposium. Foster Parents to participate in “icebreakers”.

Identify any regulatory or statutory changes needed to support the accomplishment of the improvement goals. None needed.

Component E: Well Being	Outcome/Systemic Factor:						
	4A – Siblings Placed Together in Foster Care						
	County’s Current Performance: As of July 1, 2006 (point-in-time analysis), 36.4% of siblings were placed with all their siblings, and 40.0% were placed with all or some of their siblings.						
	Improvement Goal 7.0: By June 2009 50% of siblings to be placed with all of their siblings, and 60% placed with all of some of their siblings.						
	Strategy 7.1:			Strategy Rationale:			
	Increase the number of licensed foster homes that can accommodate siblings placed together.			There has been a significant decline in foster placement options in Napa County in the last several years. This greatly impacts the ability to place siblings together in foster care.			
Milestones	7.1.1 Gather current data regarding the number of foster homes in Napa County and how many will take sibling groups.			Timeframe	July 2007	Assigned to	Continuing Services Supervisor, Staff Services Analyst
	7.1.2 Gather data on how many sibling placement homes are needed in Napa County.				July 2007		Continuing Services Supervisor,

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					Staff Services Analyst
	7.1.3 Attend the foster parent association meetings and request assistance with recruiting foster parents.		August 2007		Child Welfare Director Assistant Child Welfare Director
	7.1.4 Develop a plan to provide for the infrastructure that is needed for recruiting foster homes. E.G. home study worker, orientations, stream lining application process.		December 2007		Child Welfare Director Assistant Child Welfare Director Continuing Services Supervisor
	7.1.5 Develop a targeted recruitment plan and a way to prioritize the licensing of prospective foster homes that will accept siblings.		December 2007		Assistant Child Welfare Director Continuing Services Supervisor
	7.1.6 Implement recruitment plan.		March 2008		Continuing Services Supervisor
Strategy 7.2: Foster Home Retention		Strategy Rationale:			
In the last several years Napa County has seen a dramatic reduction in the number of County foster homes.		Developing a strong retention program will assist in retaining foster parents who will be available for sibling placements.			
Milestones	7.2.1 Explore ways to retain foster parents, including certificates, and other incentives.	Timeframe	July 2007	Assigned to	Continuing Services Supervisor
	7.2.2 Develop a retention plan for foster parents.		September 2007		Continuing Services Supervisor

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	7.2.3 Meet with Community College regarding foster parent training and possible curriculum improvements.		January 2008		Child Welfare Director, Continuing Services Supervisor
	7.2.4 Review and develop expectations of County foster homes, train staff and foster parents on expectations.		July 2008		Child Welfare Director, Continuing Services Supervisor
	7.2.5 Monitor the implementation of the policy.		January 2009		Systems Services Analyst

Attachment A. Summary of Assessment

Introduction

In order to provide a 'context' for analysis, longitudinal data from the U.C. Berkeley Child Welfare Services (CWS/CMS) Reports database² was downloaded and graphed³. The initial interpretation of trends was substantiated by interviews with individuals and work groups of representatives (e.g., foster parents, advocates, direct service professionals, attorneys) of the Child Welfare System in Napa County. The work groups were also used to gather information on systemic factors.

Napa County's small size causes significant swings in many of the rates considered in the Self Assessment; idiosyncrasies of one or two cases results in exaggerated drops or gains in percentage points. Follow-up questions should be asked of any rate that seems surprising: How big are the actual numbers? Could the changes actually be the result of circumstances in only one or two cases?

A. Conclusion: Child Welfare Services Participation

More exploration is needed to identify how American Canyon is growing demographically. Growth trends in American Canyon describe a significant demographic shift underway in Napa County that is a common thread throughout this Self Assessment. If growth patterns hold true, families from American Canyon will command an increasing percentage of agency attention in the coming years. Attention should be paid to find out the characteristics of the population there.

The changing rate of child welfare services participation raises concerns. Staffing issues and the introduction of a new philosophy in 2004 help explain the more consistent referral and substantiation rates in 2004 and 2005: a new supervisor started and has stayed in the department since then. Other reports have indicated that during 2002-2003 significant staffing changes, increased use of extra help staff, and a directive to accept and enter every call as a referral triggered an increase in the rate of referrals and a lower substantiation rate.

Whether these numbers are reliable also poses significant challenges to data interpretation. During the time period in question, CWS/CMS use and practices were still fluid; categories of referral responses were changed by the state, cases were opened and petitions filed at times without recording a substantiation within CWS/CMS. The steady rate of children in care throughout the period under study supports the validity of these questions

One strong improvement made towards increasing data consistency is the recent hire of a CWS/CMS support analyst (ATM) to coordinate CWS/CMS use and training. As a former social worker the person in this position has a uniquely practical perspective on the use of

² U.C. Berkeley Child Welfare Research Center Child Welfare Services (CWS/CMS) Reports Performance Indicators Project.

³ See Self Assessment .

CWS/CMS, considered ideal for the ATM position. Nearly universally, this position was regarded as a strength of the Management Information System in Napa County by respondents.

As in 2003, current stakeholders in 2006 agree that there is an ongoing need for training on the effective use of CMS/CWS. Now that staff have three more years of experience in using the CWS/CMS application as well as SafeMeasures and Business Objects, there is a need for developing policies, procedures, and reporting guidelines that make more effective use of all technology resources.

The Self Assessment Committee believes that the upcoming implementation of the Comprehensive Assessment Tool (CAT) will more broadly standardize decision making and CWS/CMS use. Per CDSS, the agency's processes for screening referrals and determining responses must be standardized. The CAT is a standardized decision-making tool for determining responses to referral (i.e. deciding if the referral is substantiated) among other decisions throughout the life of a case. The CAT is used throughout the life of a case to guide and justify decisions, which should help to eliminate the types of fluctuations seen in substantiations and referrals during 2002 and 2003.

One particular population who are not tracked well by CWS/CMS is foster youth participating in the Independent Living Program (ILP). Documenting and tracking progress for foster youth receiving ILP services needs to be standardized (recording substitute care provider visits for example). The CWS/CMS systems support position is one step in achieving this; the second step is for intensive CWS/CMS training for new staff with ongoing follow-up training as needed.

Conclusion: Safety Outcomes 1 & 2

Considered together results from all of the Safety Indicators show that children receiving children's welfare services in Napa County are increasingly protected from abuse and neglect. A broader array of services for children who are not removed from the home greatly enhances Napa County's ability to prevent recurrence of abuse or neglect.

That the actual numbers of instances of recurrent abuse or neglect are decreasing for all of the indicators also speaks to the caliber of social workers in Napa County. Similarly, the absence of any instances of abuse while in foster care speaks well of the quality of foster care available in Napa County. Results considered later in this section reveal an overall deficit in the number of foster homes available in Napa County. However, this indicator reveals that among the homes that are available we enjoy a consistently high level of care for our children.

Moving forward, the Self Assessment Committee focused in particular on efforts to expand and enhance the service array available to children in Napa County. CWS aims to expand and deepen our community service array partnerships. In particular, with Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) with community agencies to resolve issues around confidentiality, such an MOU would also aid in case planning by facilitating 'guided' referrals to community resources, especially prevention-oriented programs.

There is also a need to expand the reach of services geographically. While the One Family Network has recently begun offering services throughout Napa County, there remains a strong need for balancing the services offered throughout the county. Many respondents noted that the differences in services available for north and south county residents was not something well understood and geographic differences in the availability should be reviewed.

Throughout the Self Assessment there is an ever present need for more bilingual staff and resources. In Napa County, as in most California counties demand for services in Spanish has greatly outstripped the availability of these services. Increasing bilingual Spanish staff, resources, and service array is an ever pressing need moving forward.

Respondents also identified a need for mandated reporters training particularly in local schools. There are questions and misperceptions around what information to expect from child welfare following a report. Workgroup participants thought this might reflect a lack of training for Napa County teachers in the roles, responsibilities and expectations of mandated reporters. Respondents also noted some difficulty holding training sessions in school with teachers due to school training schedules that are full for several years in advance.

Given the improvements in safety outcomes for children receiving CWS services, there remained serious concerns on the part of the Self Assessment Committee about performance on indicators 2B and 2C. While these are process measures they go the core of children's welfare services, protecting children from abuse or neglect, particularly in responses that require an immediate response. Even 5% of cases out of compliance on this measure are hard to excuse.

Efforts to improve performance on these indicators are ongoing and should be coordinated. Napa County's self monitoring plan tracks compliance for 10-day and immediate investigations to an individual case level using the Safe-measures monitoring tool. The department's quality improvement plan seeks to improve performance on 10-day investigations to bring initial face-to-face contacts in line with COA accreditation standards⁴ of no more than 3 days from the date of the referral. More needs to be done to integrate these separate monitoring processes.

Documentation issues have historically complicated measures of Napa County's performance compliance with monthly social worker visits. Nevertheless, the Self Assessment Committee felt strongly that performance and recording of monthly contacts has significantly improved over the last two years. Other data monitors (SafeMeasures) indicate that our results for second half of 2006 on this indicator are now consistently above the federal minimum of 90%.

Anecdotally, social workers report performing a higher percentage of visits than records often indicate. One cause of this difference is that case plans for guardianship cases are not entered directly into CWS/CMS. By virtue of a county practice, case plans are instead attached to the case in CWS/CMS as manual attachments, disallowing the use of visit exceptions with these cases as is appropriate.

⁴ The Council on Accreditation (COA) partners with human service organizations worldwide to improve service delivery outcomes by developing, applying, and promoting appropriate best practice standards.

Efforts to improve performance on this indicator must first consider whether Napa County accurately records monthly social worker visits. In particular, a policy should be developed to address entering case plans for guardianship cases directly into the CWS/CMS system. These cases do not require monthly visits by a social worker and compliance figures the indicator should reflect this fact.

Conclusion: Permanency Outcomes

Since 2000 Napa County has increased the availability of up-front services. Stronger up-front services limit the need to remove children from their homes and changes the characteristics of those that are removed. While this has improved outcomes for children prior to and subsequent from out-of-home care it has also changed the composition of children who are placed in out-of-home care. Cases in which children are removed are more likely to be complicated, requiring more intense efforts to move toward the point of reunification. This, in turn may lengthen the time that is needed for reunification and adoption.

Conversely, the number of reentries into out-of-home care is declining as a result of the broader service array. Performance on preventing reentries is most directly influenced by provision of services outside of open cases. Early intervention, up-front services and follow-up services for families leaving care are available from our community partners. Napa County's improvement on this indicator most directly results from an expansion of Family Group Conferencing services and Family Preservation Services that bring families more directly into the decision making process and expand services the agency and the community offer to children while they continue to be placed in the home.

The strong relationship between Napa County CWS and County Counsel for Napa County is an important factor in promoting timely reunifications. Strong collaboration reflects the healthy court culture in Napa County; the accessibility and helpfulness of County Counsel to CWS staff bolsters this collaboration. Familiarity is built through informal brown bag lunches that promote communication and problem solving. The new Court Commissioner is mentioned as an added strength to the court system in the past several years. Also, the re-emergence of SARMS⁵ is seen as strength in its ability to increase parental compliance and involvement in case plans.

Improving permanency outcomes is dependent on increasing the involvement of families and care providers in several aspects of children's welfare services.

Respondents generally feel that the court system continues to evolve towards a family-friendly environment, but that there is room for improvement. For example, through the development of easy-to-understand materials (in both English and Spanish) that explain the court process. In addition, there continues to be a need for more communication between the representatives of the court, families, and children before and during the court proceedings.

⁵ The Substance Abuse Recover Management System (SARMS) program aims to assist parents to overcome substance abuse problems. Based on an assessment by a Recovery Specialist the court may order a parent to participate in SARMS as part of the court ordered reunification plan.

During case planning, family involvement has emerged as even more of a focus in 2006. Two points were supported strongly by participants: Motions to continue should be developed before coming to court, otherwise families are forced to wait needlessly; similarly, there is a need for minute orders to be entered into the CWS management information system in a timely manner. In terms of scheduling, CWS should also make every effort to encourage families to attend case planning sessions through the use of “flexible scheduling for case planning and reviews that are more reflective of family schedules.” Finally, the format of the case plan should be evaluated and considered in light of a family’s ease of use.

Increasing the involvement of families and care providers is less obviously but just as importantly a factor of increasing inter-agency collaboration (e.g., Children’s Mental Health, State Adoptions). Strengths noted by respondents included: regular monthly meetings between State Adoptions and CWS that give case carrying staff a chance to interact directly (noted as a strength for case planning by both CWS and State Adoptions); and support of management for child and family involvement and creative case planning has grown since 2003.

Many of the needs for increasing family and care provider involvement require expanded training efforts. First, several respondents noted the need for training staff on ways to identify family strengths during the planning process. Second, cross training and collaboration between CWS and Children’s Mental Health to clarify expectations and increase family involvement in cases with shared assignments between the two departments was recommended.

While reports of collaboration between CWS and Children’s Mental Health were generally positive, several respondents expressed a desire for clarification regarding roles and responsibilities in shared cases. Referrals for TBS services illustrate this gap in expectations clearly as CWS often feels a lack of clear responsiveness once screening information is sent through CFBH while CFBH supervisors feel existing forums, such as MARP, for the dissemination of information are not fully utilized by CWS.

There was also strong agreement on the need for all children entering as dependents to receive a mental health screening including assessments for families. This could be very helpful for court in considering family needs although it is not often requested by CWS staff.

While performance on stability indicators 3B & C would seem to indicate that children are frequently and easily finding well matched, out-of-home placement, the Self Assessment Committee is concerned that these scores also reflect limited capacity in Napa County’s foster care resources. Analysis of Napa County’s performance on foster care placement stability is obscured by decreases in foster care resources during the years under consideration. With fewer resources available for placement it is difficult to discern whether placements are stable as a result of appropriate matches or if inappropriate matches are maintained due to limited alternatives for placement.

From the number of foster homes to available respite care for foster families, the number of foster care resources in Napa County has shown a significant decline during the last three years. This decline in foster care resources is further illustrated by Napa’s results on outcome indicators

for placement in least restrictive setting and placements with siblings. Fewer foster care homes available for placements has an impact across a variety of process and outcome measures and will be an important component of the System Improvement Plan.

Conclusion: Preserving Lifelong Connections Outcomes

The decreasing rate of siblings placed together is one of the stronger findings of this Self Assessment. Fewer siblings in foster care together is likely a result of fewer placement options available for sibling sets. Beginning in 2003, Napa County lost many of its long time foster families, as a result there were fewer options available for placing siblings together. Particular effort and attention should be made to recruit and retain foster families willing to take sibling sets into care. The Self-Assessment Committee believes that foster home recruitment is indicated to improve performance on placing siblings in care together. Recent changes in the Emergency Response philosophy to look beyond Napa County for placement options should further improve results on this indicator as more options will be found farther a field to be place siblings together.

Foster Home recruitment and retention will be a point of emphasis for Napa County CWS on the System Improvement Plan. The need for additional foster family options and emergency placement options has increased since the 2003 assessment. Additional training, targeted recruitment, public relations, provider recognition, support groups, and mentors continue to be on the list of needs for 2006. The suggestion of many workgroup participants was that these components be thought of as a whole system/curriculum whose efforts could be coordinated.

The Self Assessment committee noted that several foster parents have also maintained a longstanding close and supportive relationship with the agency. They are often included on recruitment and orientation efforts during home visits with both the licensing worker and a seasoned foster parent. These efforts hinge on the long-term relationships between foster families and social workers and the Napa County Foster Parent Association. The strong working relationship between these groups is a foundation of the foster care system in Napa County.

In terms of retention, respite care continues to lead the list of needs. Training could also play an important role in retention possibly through a certification system that qualifies foster parents at different levels of expertise. Several new needs that surfaced including: closure for families and foster children, and the use of exit interviews to gather more information about retention strategies.

Placements in out-of-home care with a relative must also increase. Recent efforts have been made to this end including: clarification of due diligence roles and responsibilities when searching for relatives of children in-care, discussion of a training program for social workers on the literature findings of outcomes for children in Foster Family Agency care. More should be done to improve performance on this indicator by expanding the agency's ability to search for relatives of children in placement and emphasize findings in child welfare literature of outcomes for children in relative as compared to foster family agency care.

Participants consistently noted the need for more for expanded relative placements through:

- Relative caregivers should be included in foster parent training
- Quicker results from DOJ regarding live scan results

Conclusion: Well Being Outcome

The impact of VOICES for emancipating foster youth cannot be overstated. The program is the first of its kind nationally to be run by former foster children. Their experiences in the system and leaving the system help prepare children as they leave CWS. These and other services can be utilized more consistently and mindfully through more consistent involvement of youth in the development of independent living transition plans.

B. Areas for further exploration through the PQCR

Napa, Sonoma, and Marin counties collaborated on the first tri-county PCQR in the State during the summer of 2006. Representatives from CWS and Probation in all three counties met for one week to complete the process. Teams from adjoining counties participated in case reviews and interviews. Debriefings were completed with all teams present so that challenges, barriers, and best practices could be shared. This proved to be an effective use of county resources and beneficial to all that participated.

Unique Tri-County Issues

All three counties face similar challenges in both CWS and Probation services to youth both in and out of home placement. For example, note the similarity of the focus areas selected by the tri-county teams:

County	Focus Area	
	Child Welfare Services	Probation
Napa	Reentry after reunification	Time to reunification
Marin	Reentry after reunification Time to reunification	Parent engagement during placement and reunification
Sonoma	Time to reunification	Time to reunification

In addition, all three counties are confronting issues⁶ that include: (1) increased used of local placement options by other counties; (2) dwindling placement options; (3) lack of treatment resources for use by probation; and (4) lack of treatment resources for infant, child and family mental health services.

Focus Areas

⁶ Some of these issues are statewide as well.

CWS and Probation selected focus areas by using data obtained from the State and from the Self-Improvement Plan (SIP). Both agencies selected an area in which performance was below Federal standard or could be improved.

Child Welfare Services

Focus Area:

3G - Reentry after reunification (12 months)

Link to High-Priority Outcome Measures:

For all children who entered child welfare supervised foster care for the first time (and stayed at least five days) during the 12-month study period and were reunified within 12 months of entry, what percent re-entered foster care within 12 months of reunification?

Goals of Review:

To identify promising practices in ensuring successful reunification as measured by the number of families that re-enter the child welfare system within 12 months of reunification.

Establish and implement policy and procedures for teamwork and communication among birth parents, relatives, non-relative extended family members, foster parents, adoptive parents, and social workers.

Establish guidelines for visitation that are both safe and appropriate towards reunification.

Establish best-practice procedures to engage birth parents, relatives, non-relative extended family members, foster parents, adoptive parents, and community resources early in the assessment and planning for the child.

Provide training for social workers, social worker supervisors, adoptive parents, and foster parents in all of the above processes.

Review Questions:

What are client, service, organizational, and community factors/resources that contribute to a family's ability to succeed with reunification?

What are the factors that present barriers to a family's success?

What are the elements to consider in planning for birth parent, relative, non-relative extended family member, foster parent, and adoptive parent communication?

How does a social worker assess family readiness and/or response to possible visitation changes, and how is change facilitated?

What needs to be improved in County processes to increase the birth family's chances for success?

What is the role of the supervisor in supporting the social worker's efforts?

Desired Outcomes:

Establish written policies and procedures that support best practices for assessment, planning, visitation, and communication among birth parents, relatives, non-relative extended family members, foster parents, adoptive parents and social workers.

Identification of training and resource needs for social workers, social worker supervisor and foster parents, to help families successfully reunify and reduce the number of families that re-enter CWS.

Probation Department

Focus Area:

3E – Time to Reunification

Link to High-Priority Outcome Measures:

Length of Time To Exit Foster Care to Reunification

Percent of youth reunified within 12 months. Of all youth who were reunified from probation supervised foster care during the 12 month study period, what percent had been in care for less than 12 months?

Goals of Review:

Increase the percentage of youth that are reunified within 12 months of placement.

Increase parental engagement as measured by:

- The percentage of parents who keep their appointments with probation officers or appropriately arrange to reschedule them.
- The percentage of parents who are referred to and complete Parent Project.
- The percentage of parents who follow up on service referrals to outside providers.

Review Questions:

For Probation Officers:

What are the probation practices that

 Increase rates of reunification?

 Increase parent and minor buy in on case plan objectives?

What are the barriers or challenges to reunification efforts?

Are there resources available to child welfare services that are not available to probation that might increase reunification efforts?

What additional training might help to facilitate timely reunification?

For Supervisors:

What are the barriers or challenges to reunification efforts.

Are there supervisory practices that facilitate reunification efforts?

What system changes might increase reunification?

What resources are available to CPS and not probation that might increase reunification?

What additional training might help to facilitate timely reunification?

Desired Outcomes:

Plan for the prioritization and implementation of policy changes that will increase reunification efforts and parent engagement.

Plan to solicit regional training assistance from UC Davis on best practices.

A complete copy of the report with findings (titled *Peer Quality Case Review, Napa County Report, July 2006*) is available from Napa County Child Welfare Services
Napa County Child Welfare Services